



Department of Energy
Germantown, MD 20874-1290

JUL 10 1996

Marty Blume, Ph.D.
Deputy Director
Brookhaven National Laboratory
Associated Universities, Inc.
P.O. Box 5000
Upton, New York 11973-5000

Dear Dr. Blume:

As you know, on May 15, 1996, the Department of Energy (DOE), along with the Department of Interior (DOI), signed a joint communique with the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) regarding the medical monitoring and care program and environmental monitoring program currently being provided by the U.S. Government. We view this communique as providing a new framework for working in partnership with the Marshallese.

On June 26, 1996, when we both provided testimony on DOE's Marshall Islands medical monitoring and care program before the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, you stated that Brookhaven National Laboratory (BNL) needed increased funding in fiscal year (FY) 1997 to provide an additional half-time physician, as well as a physician's assistant or nurse practitioner to ensure that your program is accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations. Given that the Department's budget for the Marshall Islands medical monitoring and care program for FY 1997 is the same as it was in FY 1996, any increase in BNL's funding level, if approved, would have to result from a reallocation of currently planned FY 1997 funding.

Pursuant to the commitments made in the joint communique, before we can consider reallocating funding within DOE's Marshall Islands programs, we need the full participation of our Marshallese counterparts. In order to begin such discussions, we will need more information from you and your staff. First, per previous discussions between our offices, we still need to work with you on formulating a clear statement of work for BNL's support of DOE's Marshall Islands medical monitoring and care program. We would also like your recommendations for areas of potential cost savings in your program as it is currently configured. Finally, we need a more detailed technical and cost proposal from you regarding the duties to be performed by the half-time physician and the physician's assistant you have proposed to add to your current program. Once we have had a chance to review this information and discuss it with you, we can begin to identify changes in the Marshall Islands medical monitoring and care program we would like to suggest to the Marshallese for further discussion. Based on the outcomes of such discussions, we can proceed to modify our plans for FY 1997 as necessary.



We would also like your input regarding some of the important other issues we plan to be discussing with the Marshallese such as eligibility for medical care, definition of exposed versus unexposed populations, land-based versus sea-based medicine for the outer islands, and which clinical diseases should fall within the purview of our DOE medical monitoring and care program. These are among the issues to be reviewed at a series of meetings that Foreign Minister Phillip Muller has requested be conducted in Majuro in the fall. The RMI Embassy has suggested September 18-20, 1996, as an acceptable time to conduct these meetings, and we hope this schedule will allow you to participate with us.

In order to be prepared for these meetings, we would like your input in response to this letter by August 20, 1996. By way of followup, I suggest that, in addition to any interim consultations between our staffs that may be necessary, we meet either in person or via teleconference during the week of August 26, 1996, to plan for these meetings in Majuro.

We look forward to your insights on how we can enhance the cost-effective delivery of services under the Marshall Islands medical monitoring and care program given current budgetary constraints. With your input, and in close collaboration with our RMI counterparts, I am confident that we can have productive and mutually beneficial meetings in Majuro and establish a clear path forward for continued collaboration with the Marshallese.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul J. Seligman', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Paul J. Seligman, M.D., M.P.H.
Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Health Studies

cc: Dr. Richard Setlow, BNL
Dr. Darrell Joel, BNL